

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND NINETEETH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 2 March 1967, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. A.F. AZEREDO da SILVEIRA (Brazil)

GE.67-3570
67-07400

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. A. F. AZEREDO da SILVEIRA
Mr. D. SILVEIRA da MOTA
Mr. A. da COSTA GUIMARAES
Mr. S. de QUEIROZ DUARTE

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. CHRISTOV
Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV
Mr. T. DAMIANOV
Mr. D. KOSTOV

Burma:

U KYAW MIN

Canada:

Mr. E. L. M. BURNS
Mr. S. F. RAE
Mr. C. J. WEBSTER
Mr. C. J. MARSHALL

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. P. WINKLER
Mr. T. LAHODA
Mr. V. VAJNAR

Ethiopia:

Dejazmatch A. ABERRA
Mr. A. ZELLEKE
Mr. B. ASSFAW

India:

Mr. V. C. TRIVEDI
Mr. K. P. JAIN

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI
Mr. G. P. TOZZOLI
Mr. E. FRANCO
Mr. F. SORO

Mexico:

Mr. A. GARCIA ROBLES
Mr. M. TELLO MACIAS

Nigeria:

Mr. B. O. TONWE

Poland:

Mr. M. BLUSZTAJN

Mr. J. GOLDBLAT

Mr. E. STANIEWSKI

Romania:

Mr. N. ECOBESCO

Mr. O. IONESCO

Mr. C. UNGUREANU

Mr. C. MITRAN

Sweden:

Mrs. A. MYRDAL

Mr. A. EDELSTAM

Mr. H. BLIX

Mr. R. BOMAN

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. A. A. ROSHCHIN

Mr. O. A. GRINEVSKY

Mr. I. I. CHEPROV

Mr. V. B. TOULINOV

United Arab Republic

Mr. H. KHALLAF

Mr. A. A. SALAM

Mr. M. SHAKER

United Kingdom:

Mr. B. J. GARNETT

Mr. R. I. T. CROMARTIE

Mr. M. R. MORLAND

United States of America:

Mr. W. C. FOSTER

Mr. S. DE PALMA

Mr. G. BUNN

Mr. C. G. BREAN

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative
of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

1. The CHAIRMAN (Brazil): I declare open the 290th plenary meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.
2. Mr. WINKLER (Czechoslovakia): First of all I should like to thank all those, including both co-Chairmen, who have welcomed me here as a new participant in the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. I wish to assure them all, and indeed the whole Committee, that the Czechoslovak delegation will continue as heretofore to do its utmost to contribute in an effective way to the success of our common cause.
3. Since I did not take part personally in the previous discussions on the complicated questions related to the problems of disarmament, I wanted before taking the floor to listen to the statements of the most experienced participants in our deliberations and, in doing so, to get an idea of the prospects lying before us. I received an encouraging impression that there are good auspices that this year's session might achieve vital results and thus take an important place in the history of our Committee. Like the representative of Bulgaria, I too am personally glad to be able to take part in its work at this stage when it seems that we might finally succeed in reaching an agreement on such an important problem as the banning of the further spread of nuclear weapons. That, I think, would be the best celebration of the forthcoming fifth anniversary of the activities of the Committee.
4. The fulfilment of that anticipation, which is justified by a rapprochement of the positions of the deciding nuclear Powers, would unequivocally affect in a positive way the present international situation, which unfortunately continues to be dangerous due to the United States military actions in South-East Asia and to the activities of forces which have not ceased to oppose any relaxation of tension and any real improvement of the international climate.
5. At the opening meeting of this session on 21 February (ENDC/PV.287) voices were heard here saying that we should not deal with those alarming events, that they did not belong in this forum and had no connexion with the Committee's agenda. My delegation cannot subscribe to such views. It is true, as has already been stated here, that we are not in a position to solve those problems, and are unable to remove their causes ourselves; but we definitely cannot ignore them. We must point them out as phenomena which considerably weaken our efforts and make the Committee's work more difficult.

(Mr. Winkler, Czechoslovakia)

6. When dealing with problems of the elimination of the threat of nuclear war and of safeguarding the security of all States it is impossible not to see or to ignore such shocking facts, indignantly condemned by the whole of world public opinion, as the growing United States aggression in Viet-Nam, the escalation of bombing of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, and the danger of the spreading of this undeclared war to further areas of the Asian continent.

7. Numerous declarations by various United States officials, including Mr. Foster, the Chairman of the United States delegation, regarding the willingness of the United States to negotiate and to re-install peace in those areas are in contradiction to the deeds and facts. So far, every suitable opportunity for starting negotiations has been intentionally missed on the United States side. Moreover, all attempts and offers made with that aim, coming from various quarters, have been responded to by increased escalation of the aggression. We last witnessed this fact after the short cease-fire at the New Year, the prolongation of which, together with pertinent talks, might have become the expected turning-point towards a peaceful solution in Viet-Nam.

8. Instead, more ruthless and bigger air-raids have followed. Moreover, in recent days we have been witnessing even new forms of the escalation of war, such as the expansion of aggression against the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam by artillery fire both from the sea and from the ground. What then is the use of statements on serious intentions to stop the bloodshed in Viet-Nam? And how could we be silent about those things at our meetings here where the concept of a world without weapons is being discussed?

9. The mission of our Committee was characterized most impressively by the representative of the United Arab Republic in his statement on 21 February. Ambassador Khallaf said that the only item on our agenda was "the problem of the survival of mankind in this second half of the twentieth century", (ENDC/PV.287, para.7). Not only the members of the Committee but also all other States -- indeed, all nations of the world -- are interested in the successful solution of this problem.

(Mr. Winkler, Czechoslovakia)

10. This single item consists, of course, of many aspects. There are various possibilities of approach to finding its solution. General and complete disarmament would be the most consistent and the most effective way of all. That is why, already at the time of the establishment of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, the working-out of a draft treaty on general and complete disarmament was considered its main goal. The achievement of this goal continues to be our main task.

11. While seeking general and complete disarmament it is, however, imperative to continue to pursue all possibilities for partial measures, the materialization of which would bring us nearer to the ultimate goal, and which have --- as experience shows -- better prospects of achieving positive results. That experience has also been confirmed by the practice of the Eighteen-Nation Committee so far. There is no reason why we should now depart from proceeding in the same manner. That would also correspond to the standpoint expressed by the twenty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly, which in its resolutions (ENDC/135) invited our Committee to discuss, as the most urgent problem, measures against a further spread of nuclear weapons (A/RES/2153 A (XXI)), and also to deal with the other problems of disarmament such as the banning of underground nuclear tests (A/RES/2163 (XXI)) and the liquidation of foreign military bases in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America (A/RES/2165 (XXI)).

12. The example of Latin America has affirmed the usefulness and attractiveness of the proposals for the creation of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world. While congratulating the Latin-American countries on their recent achievement in this field, and joining those representatives here who have paid a highly-deserved tribute to Ambassador Garcia Robles for his outstanding role therein, our delegation wishes to reaffirm that the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic fully supports all such proposals. It is our firm opinion that, after the achievement of progress in solving the problem of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, new possibilities might be open for achieving agreements on the implementation of those proposals in other areas as well.

13. Our Committee has for a number of years always followed the principle that its main attention should be given to those questions with the best prospects of actual results and of reaching agreement. Undoubtedly it will be wise to adhere to that

(Mr. Winkler, Czechoslovakia)

principle in the Committee's proceedings this year also. In present circumstances it is, beyond any doubt, the question of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to which this principle applies first of all. In the last two years our Committee has paid the greatest attention to that question. To do so was fully in keeping with the urgency of the problem, which was emphasized also in the memoranda of the eight non-aligned countries members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee in 1965 (ENDC/158) and in 1966 (ENDC/178), as well as in the United Nations General Assembly resolution urging the Committee --

"... to give high priority to the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in accordance with the mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX);" (A/RES/2153 (XXI)/Rev.1).

This has also been rightly stressed by Secretary-General U Thant in his message to our Committee (ENDC/PV.287, para. 4).

14. Since the Committee went into recess in August last year a favourable development has ensued in the negotiations related to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In their statements on 21 February (ENDC/PV.287) the representatives of the USSR and the United States informed us of the talks which have taken place during that time. The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic appreciates the endeavours aimed at a rapprochement of positions and received with satisfaction the news that certain progress had been made in the course of those talks.

15. We cannot, however, ignore the fact that there are still certain obstacles on the road towards agreement. It suffices to recall the campaign against a treaty on non-proliferation carried on in some countries, and particularly in the Federal Republic of Germany, and culminating just in the days when the Committee was resuming its work. That campaign is, for tactical purposes and for tactical reasons, based upon objections intended to create the impression that the opponents of the treaty are concerned with the safeguarding of conditions for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the interests of economic development.

16. It is, however, objectively directed against the basic idea of the treaty itself, against the very principle of non-proliferation. It is by no means a mere coincidence that this campaign took the most obstinate form especially in the

(Mr. Winkler, Czechoslovakia)

Federal Republic of Germany. It had already become clear in the course of previous negotiations that the nuclear ambitions of the Federal Republic of Germany were the main impediment to the conclusion of an agreement on non-proliferation. Numerous recent statements by official government representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany testify to the fact that their claims have not been abandoned by any means.

17. Permit me in this connexion to quote the words spoken by the President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Antonin Novotny, in his speech only a few days ago, on 22 February:

"Twenty-one years have elapsed since the end of World War Two and the world is faced with an armaments race. Also our neighbour, the Federal Republic of Germany, although it should have enough experience from the past, is trying again to gain primacy in building up and arming its troops and in seeking access to nuclear weapons. Although it justifies its claims by the needs of scientific research and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, there is no guarantee whatsoever that the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany would not use those possibilities -- together with the experience gained within NATO -- for providing its army with nuclear weapons. We have sufficient experience from the past to be very cautious; and so far there are practically no signs at all that this Government is ready to take the existing realities into account and to adapt its policies accordingly."

18. The opposition of the ruling circles of the Federal Republic of Germany to a treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is in no way an isolated phenomenon. It ensues from the general course of their policy and is an integral part thereof. The essence of that policy consists in refusing to recognize the realities created in consequence of the Second World War, and in seeking a revision of its results. The dangers resulting from that policy are, furthermore, underlined by the growing strength of neo-nazism, which the world has been witnessing and of which mention has already been made here in our Committee.

(Mr. Winkler, Czechoslovakia)

In this policy an important role has always been and continues to be ascribed to nuclear weapons. This explains the obstinate opposition to all steps which would prevent further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

19. However, in spite of the existing obstacles our task is to go ahead and do our utmost to work out as soon as possible the text of a treaty on non-proliferation. We are convinced that such a treaty would also be an important stimulus to the deliberations of further questions and would create more favourable conditions for solving them.

20. These are some of the remarks I wanted to make at this stage on behalf of the Czechoslovak delegation. As I have already pointed out, the resumed work of our Committee has begun in an atmosphere of optimism based upon expectations that certain progress may soon be attained. I should like to express my hope that this time those expectations will not be disappointed.

21. The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of the United States of America in exercise of the right of reply.

22. Mr. FOSTER (United States of America): I find it necessary to exercise my right of reply to some of the comments which have just been made by the representative of Czechoslovakia.

23. He made the allegation that the United States has engaged in further escalation of the hostilities in Viet-Nam. He adduces this as evidence that the United States is not interested in a peaceful settlement in that beleaguered country. Indeed, I was surprised to hear his statement that opportunities for a settlement have been intentionally missed by the United States. The United States has repeatedly made the point that it is ready to talk peace. We want peace. Our President has stated that we are prepared to go more than half-way to meet any equitable overture from the other side. We are prepared to negotiate without conditions; we are prepared to engage in a reciprocal reduction of hostilities; but we are not encouraged by our experiences during recent truce periods. Indeed, the evidence is quite clear that those pauses were used by Hanoi for massive efforts of re-supply for its troops in South Viet-Nam.

(Mr. Foster, United States)

24. If the Czechoslovak representative knows of some concrete opportunity which has been missed I hope he will hasten to inform my Government, through appropriate channels, or other governments in a position to use their influence in this matter, or the Security Council through the Secretary-General of the United Nations. In our search for a peaceful settlement in Viet-Nam we have sought the help of the Secretary-General and of many governments. So far the search has proved completely unsuccessful. None the less, we shall persist until we achieve peace. Meanwhile, those who truly wish to help that search would do a great deal of good if they would also address themselves to Hanoi and to those who support Hanoi. Peace will require the joint efforts of both sides; it cannot be brought about by any one-sided approach.

25. I should also like to comment on certain other charges made by the representative of Czechoslovakia with reference to the Federal Republic of Germany. Similar charges have been made by other members of this Conference -- charges that the Federal Republic of Germany is blocking a non-proliferation treaty. Those charges seem completely uncalled for. There is no draft formulation before this Committee. The questions that are being asked by the Federal Republic are questions that every nation has the right to ask in view of the importance that such a treaty has to other nations; and until there is a draft treaty these questions -- or any other questions that arise concerning the security of every nation concerned in this quest -- are perfectly legitimate questions, and they deserve and need to be answered.

26. Mr. WINKLER (Czechoslovakia): I should like to limit myself now to a few remarks.

27. First, I should like to state clearly that it is our firm opinion that every representative around this table is not only entitled but under an obligation to state the position of his country on all matters relevant to the work of the Committee. We do not claim this right for ourselves alone; we think it natural that all other representatives should have the same right. I accept the remarks just made by the United States representative as an exercise of this right, which we have never questioned.

28. Secondly, as to the remarks in my statement concerning further escalation of the war in Viet-Nam, I should only like to make clear the facts which are well known to the whole world. In recent days we have witnessed the fact that the United States is

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engaged in warlike actions in Viet-Nam against the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam not only in the air, as had been the case up to now, but also on the ground. I think that is the simple fact: that the United States is now engaged in land war actions in the territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam.

29. As far as the missed opportunities are concerned, I think I can refer to the facts stated in public media all over the world. When I spoke of those opportunities I mentioned the recent events surrounding the cease-fire at the time of the New Year, and the news published in all the papers of the world about talks being under preparation. I think I must disappoint the United States representative when I say I have no other information; but I would refer to the statements made at the time by some British statesmen, and those in other quarters of the world.

30. My last remark concerns the United States representative's reply concerning what he called our charges against the Federal Republic of Germany. We do not raise charges here against anybody. We were stating --- and we shall continue to state if necessary --- facts and the views and positions of our Government. I think there was nothing new in what I said. All members can read the same things in papers, in documents, and in statements by officials of the Federal Republic of Germany. Therefore I do not think there is any need for me to go into further detail in that sense. Nevertheless, naturally I should like to reserve my right to revert, if necessary, to the points raised in the remarks of the United States representative.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 290th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Azeredo da Silveira, representative of Brazil.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Czechoslovakia and the United States of America.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 7 March 1967, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

